Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water for the Organization of the Amendment Conference

PTBT/CONF/M/SR.1
5 June 1990
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 29 May 1990, at 10 a.m.

Temporary President: Mr. AKASHI (United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs)

President: Mr. JAYASINGHE (Sri Lanka)

CONTENTS

Opening of the Meeting by the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Election of the President

Election of two Vice-Presidents

Confirmation of the nomination of the Secretary-General of the Meeting

Adoption of the agenda

Adoption of the rules of procedure

Programme of work

Adoption of arrangements for meeting the costs of the Meeting and the Conference

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared open the Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water for the Organization of the Amendment Conference and said that the Meeting was taking place at a time of rapid and dramatic change. The summit meeting between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States scheduled to begin the following day promised to be yet another milestone in the journey of co-operation upon which those countries had embarked.

2. The number of States parties to the Partial Test Ban Treaty currently stood at 118. In the preamble and article I of the Treaty, the States parties expressed their determination to seek "to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time". Article II, paragraph 1, provided for the possibility of proposing amendments to the original text signed in Moscow on 5 August 1963, and it was for that purpose that the current Meeting had been convened.

3. Ever since the conclusion of the Partial Test Ban Treaty it had been the expectation of the international community that efforts would be made to achieve the ultimate objective of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. That item had been the object of more General Assembly resolutions than any other nuclear disarmament issue. It had also been an important item on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. While the ultimate objective of a comprehensive test ban was not in question, there were still signficant differences of opinion over when and how to proceed to that goal.

4. The Secretary-General had consistently attached high importance to the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, noting that no single multilateral agreement could have a greater effect on limiting the further refinement of nuclear weapons.

5. There could be no doubt of the existence on all sides of the willingness to pursue measures to strengthen the régime for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to halt the ceaseless development of ever more devastating weapons, both nuclear and non-nuclear. Progress was indispensable if the quantitative arms race was not to be replaced by a qualitative one. Concerted action was needed to curb the vertical and horizontal proliferation and further development of nuclear weapons. The deliberations at the Amendment Conference and at the current Meeting for the organization of the Conference could have a special significance and impact on the disarmament process as a whole and efforts towards nuclear disarmament in particular.

(The Temporary President)

6. In his report on the work of the Organization submitted to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General noted that "significant additional restrictions on nuclear testing beyond the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water of 1963, leading progressively to a complete halt, together with major reductions in nuclear weapons, offer the best way to release the world from the fearful possibility of nuclear war". With the current improvement of the international climate, conditions were now more propitious and more promising for initiatives and determined action to build confidence between Member States and move towards nuclear disarmament. In that connection, it was crucial that progress be achieved towards a comprehensive test ban and a strengthening of the non-proliferation régime.

7. Although the problems to be resolved in the negotiation of an amendment to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water were indeed difficult, there was every reason to believe that the States parties would do their utmost to find appropriate and constructive measures to ensure further progress towards the common objective of a complete cessation of nuclear testing.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

8. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT proposed the election of Mr. Edmond Jayasinghe (Sri Lanka) as President of the Meeting. Mr. Jayasinghe's candidature had been proposed and supported by many delegations at the meeting of the States parties that had been held on 11 May.

9. Mr. Jayasinghe was elected President by acclamation.

10. Mr. Jayasinghe (Sri Lanka) took the Chair.

11. The PRESIDENT expressed his gratitude at having been elected to the post of President and for the great honour which had been bestowed upon him. He would do his utmost to ensure the success of the Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water for the Organization of the Amendment Conference.

12. The eventual goal which the international community had set for itself was the conclusion of a treaty on the permanent banning of all nuclear-test explosions in all environments for all time. Such a ban would be an important step towards preventing the qualitative improvement and further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

13. The Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water of 1963 had been the first international agreement of world-wide scope in the field of nuclear arms limitation. It had also helped to create a climate that made progress on other agreements in the field of nuclear arms limitation a reality.

READEX

(The President)

14. However, the international community could hardly be complacent. There was a need to work resolutely towards the removal of the nuclear threat. The positive changes in the international climate were more auspicious than ever before for accomplishing that task. The participants in the Meeting had a great opportunity to begin a process that could restore the vision of a world where there was no testing or production of nuclear weapons and which would ultimately be free of all the terrible weapons of mass destruction.

15. The States parties should bear in mind that the issues which they would be considering were complex and defied simple, facile solutions. In the course of the next two weeks, the Meeting would have to take decisions and submit recommendations on which the success of the Amendment Conference, to be held in January 1991, would depend.

16. He urged all delegations to continue to take the same constructive approach as before and to act in a spirit of co-operation and dedication to the achievement of a common objective, namely, the conclusion of a treaty which would result in the prohibition of all nuclear weapon tests.

ELECTION OF TWO VICE-PRESIDENTS

17. The PRESIDENT said that, following prior consultations among States parties, he understood that it had been agreed to elect Mr. Sotirov of Bulgaria and Ms. Courtney of Australia as Vice-Presidents.

18. Mr. Sotirov (Bulgaria) and Ms. Courtney (Australia) were elected Vice-Presidents by acclamation.

CONFIRMATION OF THE NOMINATION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE MEETING

19. The PRESIDENT suggested that Mr. Sohrab Kheradi of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, who had been nominated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in a letter dated 23 April 1990, should be confirmed as Secretary-General of the Meeting.

20. Mr. Sohrab Kheradi was confirmed as Secretary-General of the Meeting by acclamation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (PTBT/CONF/M/1)

21. The agenda was adopted.

ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE (PTBT/CONF/M/2)

22. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the States parties wished to adopt the rules of procedure as contained in document PTBT/CONF/M/2.

23. It was so decided.

PROGRAMME OF WORK (PTBT/CONF/M/5)

24. The programme of work was adopted.

ADOPTION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETING THE COSTS OF THE MEETING AND THE CONFERENCE (PTBT/CONF/M/7)

25. The PRESIDENT drew attention to document PTBT/CONF/M/7 on the arrangements for meeting the costs of the Meeting and the Conference, agreement on which had been reached at an informal meeting of States parties held on 25 May 1990. The delegations also had before them papers which identified indicative contributions and suggested levels of voluntary contributions. The voluntary contributions had been calculated in accordance with the formula proposed by the delegations of Australia, New Zealand and Sweden. The figures, pertaining to points 1 to 4 of document PTBT/CONF/M/7 would have to be adjusted to reflect the actual list of States parties and States signatories, which could be done only at the time of the Conference. He hoped that all participating delegations would accept their share of the voluntary contributions in order to meet the full costs of the Meeting and the Conference, and that they would indicate their contributions at the earliest possible date. The proposed financial arrangements would not constitute a precedent.

26. Since the Secretariat would provide assistance and services but would not be in a position to incur financial obligations until the necessary resources were available, it would be necessary to provide the Secretary-General of the United Nations with the relevant information regarding the financial arrangements.

27. Mr. DUVAL (Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance) said he believed that the announced voluntary contributions would be indicated in the information on the arrangements for meeting the costs of the Meeting through indicative contributions, which would be brought to the attention of the Secretary-General. The proposed financial arrangements did not entail any charges to the regular budget and was in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

28. Mr. JAIN (India), referring to the agreement on the arrangements for meeting the costs of the Meeting and the Conference, said that voluntary contributions would be made on a voluntary basis and that his delegation would take a decision on its voluntary contributions in accordance with established procedure.

29. Ms. MASON (Canada) said that informal consultations had been held in order to determine whether all delegations had received the proper instructions and were ready to announce voluntary contributions. During those consultations, none of the delegations had declared that it had not received the proper instructions. Since that was the case, her delegation was taking part in the current Meeting in a spirit of goodwill.

30. Mr. JAIN (India) said that his delegation was prepared to support the adoption of the draft decision contained in document PTBT/CONF/M/7. However, the provisions of the informal agreement could not be adopted as an official decision of the Meeting. India wished to point out that that issue had been the subject of the extensive consultations which had preceded the opening of the current Meeting.

31. Ms. MASON (Canada) agreed that the agreement had been informal and that it should not be given a formal character. Nevertheless, the preceding observation by the representative of India contradicted his position with respect to the informal agreement.

32. The PRESIDENT, noting that at previous consultations there had been no comments on the draft decision adopted on 25 May 1990, said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the participants in the Meeting agreed to adopt the decision contained in document PTBT/CONF/M/7.

33. It was so decided.

34. The PRESIDENT suggested that the list of delegations wishing to take part in the general exchange of views should be closed on 30 May 1990 at 3 p.m.

35. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water for the Organization of the Amendment Conference

PTBT/CONF/M/SR.2
30 May 1990
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 30 May 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. JAYASINGHE (Sri Lanka)

CONTENTS

General exchange of views

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (PTBT/CONF/M/3 and 6)

1. Mr. MARIN-BOSCH (Mexico) congratulated the President on his election and commended his efforts during the intergovernmental consultations since the adoption, on 15 December 1989, of General Assembly resolution 44/106.

2. He noted that the way to nuclear disarmament was through a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. He quoted from the joint statement issued on 27 August 1962 by President Kennedy of the United States of America and Prime Minister Macmillan of the United Kingdom in which they underscored the importance of halting nuclear tests.

3. The search for a treaty which would place a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests had been under way since 1945. The search, which had been marked by successes as well as failures, had culminated in the signing of the Moscow Treaty in the summer of 1963. He then recalled the events which had led to the signing of the Treaty, including the dialogue between the nuclear-weapon States concerning the institution by each of a unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests, the tripartite consultations within the context of the Geneva Conference during which the question of the cessation of nuclear tests had been discussed and also the efforts of the 18-State Committee on Disarmament.

4. He then quoted from the statement made in 1962 by the representative of the United States concerning the need to overcome the disagreements which had arisen between the nuclear-weapon States. On the same day that Kennedy and Macmillan had issued their joint statement, the representative of the United States had confirmed in Geneva that his country was in favour of signing a treaty which would ban nuclear tests in all spheres and would be a first step towards controlling the arms race. At the same time, two alternative texts of a draft treaty had been presented to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament by the United States and the United Kingdom. The first (ENDC/58) envisaged a ban on all nuclear tests in all spheres and proposed an international verification system. The second (ENDC/59) envisaged a ban on tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water but made no reference to the need for verification. The partial test-ban Treaty signed in Moscow was based on the provisions of the latter draft.

5. The inability to reach agreement 27 years ago on a treaty banning all nuclear tests had been due to disagreements between a small number of countries concerning on-site verification. Quoting from the statements made by the representatives of the United States and Mexico in 1962 and 1963, in which they touched upon the initial cause of those disagreements and spoke of the need to surmount them, he said that one of the goals of the Amendment Conference should be to give the United States and the United Kingdom an opportunity to set forth their conditions concerning verification of a comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapon tests and also to give the Soviet Union an opportunity to explain its views on that issue. So far, 118 States had signed and ratified the partial test-ban Treaty signed in Moscow on

(Mr. Marin-Bosch, Mexico)

5 August 1963 by the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. Currently, not a single State, whether or not it was a State Party to that Treaty, conducted nuclear tests in the atmosphere.

6. Speaking at length on article 11 of the Treaty, which referred to amendments, he again turned to the past. Initially, an amendment had needed to be endorsed by a two-thirds majority, including the original signatories in order to be adopted. In 1963, at the request of the Soviet Union, a provision concerning nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes had been deleted. The United States and the United Kingdom had responded with a request for replacement of the two-thirds majority required for the adoption of an amendment by a simple majority, in the hope that that would facilitate the adoption of future amendments which would permit such explosions. Thus two main provisions of the Treaty were the partial ban on nuclear tests and the possibility of amending the text of the Treaty.

7. The organization of the Amendment Conference was no easy matter. The depositary Governments should not reserve to themselves the right to settle the issue of how, when and where the Conference should be held. One of the purposes of the present Meeting was to enable the Parties to the Treaty jointly to take decisions relating to the organization and preparation of the Conference. At the time of its signature, the Treaty had been viewed as an important step on the road to nuclear disarmament; however, the representatives of quite a number of countries had pointed out that its effective contribution to disarmament would depend on the position of the States Parties. It was regrettable that since 1963 the number of nuclear tests not only had not diminished but had actually increased, and that the Geneva Conference on Disarmament had been unable to make any meaningful headway in that area. The super-Powers' strategic nuclear arsenals had not only not been reduced since 1963 but had actually increased, and that increase in numbers had been accompanied by a qualitative improvement. At the present time the Soviet Union was apparently prepared to agree to an international verification system which would include on-site inspection. In that connection the question arose as to what was stopping the United States and the United Kingdom, together with their NATO allies, from concluding a comprehensive test-ban treaty, as they had wanted to do in 1962.

8. Europe had undergone major changes since 1945, and the policy of deterrence no longer served its purpose. The new situation in the international arena required new military doctrines, and the political leaders of all countries must take that into consideration.

9. The vertical proliferation of nuclear arsenals must be halted and all nuclear tests banned. What was currently taking place seemed merely to be a redistribution of weapons. That could not be regarded as a measure aimed at genuine disarmament. The purpose of the Amendment Conference was to convert the partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Participants in the Conference must give thorough consideration to the issue of an international verification system. Measures must be elaborated which would help place the international community in the next century in a situation of genuine non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Marin-Bosch, Mexico)

The Conference should be viewed in a broader context, for example, in the context of the fourth review conference of the non-proliferation Treaty scheduled to be held in Geneva in August and September 1990, and of the conference of 1995, which would be devoted to that Treaty and at which a decision would be taken regarding its extension. In the course of the next five years measures must be drawn up to extend the possibilities for extending the non-proliferation Treaty beyond 1995.

10. His Government attached great importance to the Amendment Conference. It intended to work towards the achievement of the goal which had seemed so close at hand in 1963. Moreover, the forthcoming Conference, which was being convened at the request of Mexico among others, would contribute to that goal. His Government had noted with satisfaction the support of the Member States of the United Nations and of non-governmental organizations.

11. Mr. DA SILVA (Sri Lanka) observed that universal peace and security could be secured through general and complete disarmament under effective international control. That called for a complete cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and the elimination of all types of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

12. The issue of a comprehensive test ban had long been on the agenda of the international community. The United Nations had more than once called for the prohibition of testing and for States to refrain, pending the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, from conducting further tests of nuclear weapons or any other types of nuclear explosive devices. However, despite those steps, real progress in that direction had not been achieved.

13. The signing in 1963 of the Treaty Banning Nuclear-Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water had been an important contribution to the development of international relations. The encouraging developments on the international scene and the prevailing atmosphere would enable the parties to the Treaty, and above all its three depositary Powers, to work towards the achievement of the objective of banning all nuclear-weapon-test explosions for all time. In that connection, the holding of the Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty for the Organization of the Amendment Conference should be seen as an occasion for the parties to a major multilateral arms control agreement specifically in the field of nuclear disarmament to participate in negotiations for the banning of nuclear-weapon tests.

14. The question of a comprehensive test ban was important because it was the next step towards nuclear disarmament, and a special obligation under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Threshold Test-Ban Treaty of 1974 and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion Treaty of 1976, aimed at preventing and prohibiting the conduct of any underground nuclear-weapon tests with a yield of more than 150 kilotons and at controlling test explosions for peaceful purposes, did not in his delegation's view fully serve the problem of nuclear-weapon tests. The main problems in connection with a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty were ensuring adequate verification and the need for on-site inspection. A great deal of work had been done in those areas, and various modalities of verification were available,

(Mr. Da Silva, Sri Lanka)

including the arrangements under bilateral arms control agreements, which could be of assistance in reaching agreement on a multilateral verification régime. The available resources should be utilized, and all possibilities of developing a verification system and resolving any technical difficulties should be explored.

15. Essential prerequisites to the realization of the objectives of cessation of the arms race were the banning of test explosions and the destruction of nuclear weapons. Even the reduction of nuclear-weapon stocks to a certain level would not guarantee the safety of mankind. Sri Lanka was one of the States which had put forward the proposed amendment to the partial test-ban Treaty. As would be recalled, the adoption of the partial test-ban Treaty in 1963 had been due in part to the inability to reach agreement on the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, as a result of which underground tests had been left out of the Treaty. Article II of the partial test-ban Treaty provided that any State party to the Treaty could prepare amendments. That was precisely the purpose for which the present meeting had been convened. It was expected to address inter alia the organizational matters concerning the Amendment Conference. Those matters should include the establishment of mechanisms which would facilitate the work of the Conference. One such arrangement might be the establishment of the necessary committees or working groups to consider matters assigned to them during the period leading to the convening of the Conference. The areas of work assigned to them could include verification, peaceful nuclear explosions and the achievement of universal adherence to a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

16. His delegation would also like to see the Conference address, in addition to the proposed amendment, other ways and means of ensuring a definite time-frame and continuity in the process of reaching agreement by consensus on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, and felt that it would be helpful if such initiatives were given preliminary consideration at the present stage.

17. Mr. AZIKIWE (Nigeria) said that the present Meeting, scheduled to prepare the ground for the January 1991 Amendment Conference and the Treaty Banning Nuclear-Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, in order to convert it into a comprehensive test-ban treaty, was of epoch-making significance. It was difficult to imagine a more opportune time than the present for the holding of such a meeting. Over the past 10 months, the world had witnessed tremendous positive political developments, particularly in Eastern Europe. In a situation where peoples had virtually taken disarmament into their own hands, the political leaders could only face reality and recognize that the era of nuclear deterrence was over. As an integral part of the global efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons, the Meeting would certainly have a positive impact on the holding in Geneva in August 1990 of the fourth conference to review the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would in turn be conducive to the success of the Amendment Conference. Of particular significance in that connection was also, of course, the forthcoming summit meeting in Washington, at which vital disarmament issues, including the reduction of strategic weapons and the limitation of nuclear-weapon tests would be addressed.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

18. There could not be an effective non-proliferation régime unless a comprehensive nuclear test ban was achieved. Such a ban would provide an effective guarantee for halting and reversing the arms race, leading to the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. The international community could not accept piecemeal quantitative reductions as a genuine halt to the arms race while nuclear testing and qualitative weapons improvements continued unabated. A comprehensive test-ban treaty would be a litmus test of the nuclear-Powers' sincerity and readiness to usher in a new era without fear of the nuclear threat, violence or warfare.

19. The Nigerian delegation firmly believed that the current relaxation in global tension and the real improvement in international relations had made a successful Amendment Conference a distinct possibility. The survival of mankind and the environment required that the twentieth century should end with the effective abolition of nuclear weapons. In view of the qualitative and quantitative growth of nuclear weapons, as well as their vertical, horizontal and geographical proliferation, a comprehensive test ban was the only effective bulwark against the unstoppable spread of nuclear weapons and the irreversible development of third-generation nuclear weapon systems. Those who opposed a comprehensive nuclear-test ban should remember that since scientific and technical knowledge knew no boundaries, the continued proliferation of nuclear weapons without the solid barrier of a comprehensive test-ban treaty was a threat to the security not only of States within a given region, but also of the nuclear Powers themselves in the long run. The Nigerian delegation believed that those were some of the key issues that should command attention during the current Meeting.

20. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) said that his country had been one of those that had called for the Amendment Conference. Time and again, it had reaffirmed its commitment to general and complete disarmament. The decision by Bangladesh to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty was based on the firm conviction that there could be no durable peace without the elimination of nuclear stockpiles. That aim would remain a chimera unless the testing of new and more sophisticated weapons was halted.

21. Bangladesh was aware of the arguments of those who considered such a ban inappropriate. They frequently claimed that testing alone could ensure the reliability of nuclear arsenals, that such a ban would not be verifiable, and that testing promoted the production of weapons that were cost-effective at the margin (i.e. they imposed even greater costs as a fraction of GNP for countermeasures on adversaries at whom the weapons were directed). Furthermore, testing was seen as necessary in order to develop more nuclear weapons for defence and enhance security. It was thought that testing provided more information about the effects of the use of nuclear weapons in order to improve military equipment for possible use in a nuclear war.

22. It might well be that testing was indeed necessary to improve the quality of nuclear arsenals. Experience, however, showed that no existing weapons systems had proved to be cost-effective at the margin.

(Mr. Chowdhury, Bangladesh)

23. There were alternative methods that could guarantee the nuclear Powers the safety and reliability of their arsenals. Those methods were based on simulation and laboratory tests. Security could be achieved only in a nuclear-weapon-free world. Such a world, however, could not be brought about without the cessation of testing.

24. Bangladesh supported a comprehensive test ban in view of the commitment of the nuclear Powers to that course and because it felt that the ban would strengthen the non-proliferation Treaty régime and also create a favourable climate for promoting general and complete disarmament.

25. There were several countries that were very close to achieving a nuclear capability. In order to acquire nuclear weapons, they only had to take the corresponding decision. A comprehensive test ban would possibly serve as a moral imperative preventing them from doing so.

26. More nuclear-weapon tests, increased nuclear-war capability, enhanced first-strike capability and larger nuclear arsenals would not provide the security that was so necessary at the current time. Such security could be achieved only through a spirit of détente, disarmament, justice, the maintenance of international law and order, and the establishment of a system of global ethics and economic development.

27. Mr. KENYON (United Kingdom) said that his Government's position on the question of a comprehensive test ban was well known and would be stated in detail at the Amendment Conference and that the organization of the Conference should be based on the concepts of efficiency and economy. The Conference had but a single aim - to consider and take a decision on the amendment proposal submitted by Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, Sri Lanka, Venezuela and Yugoslavia. That would require a formal general debate and possibly also a forum for less formal discussion. There would be no need for complex committee structures or machinery for drafting. Work could be conducted through a plenary committee which might occasionally constitute itself as a committee of the whole under the same chairmanship. For the efficient management of the Conference, there would be need for a general committee (or bureau) and, in accordance with the informal agreement reached, there should be five vice-presidents chosen on the basis of geographical representation. A small credentials committee would also be required.

28. The draft rules of procedure should reflect that structure. With regard to the question of taking decisions, article II of the Treaty set out the procedure for adopting amendments and had to be followed. For the rest, the President should exhaust all attempts to reach consensus on a given issue before there was any question of voting. His delegation did not see any need for the elaboration of a long list of background documents such as that set out in working paper PTBT/CONF/M/6 since the relevant information could be obtained from existing documents. The statement by the representative of Mexico, for example, provided a great deal of useful information.

29. The PRESIDENT said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that, in order to rationalize work, the participants in the Meeting agreed to extend the deadline for inscription on the list of speakers for the general exchange of views to 6 p.m. on 30 May and devote the afternoon meeting on 31 May, if the list of speakers was exhausted, to the consideration of organizational matters.

30. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.